

JERSEY BEAT

VOL. IV NO. IV ISSUE #22 JULY/AUGUST '85

ANTETAM



**HOBOKEN'S
LOUISVILLE
SLUGGERS**



clintons



ANIMATION

**SACRED
DENIAL**



**Spiral
Jetty**

Phantom Tollbooth

Riff Drs.



JERSEY BEAT

THE FANZINE FOR
UNACCOMPANIED MALES AND
GIRLS LEFT OFF THE GUEST LIST

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THE MODULATORS

by Jeryl Ann Bender

MODULATORS

Tomorrow's Coming, Vintage Vinyl
1378 Springfield Ave., Irvington, NJ

Shades of Junior High School! It's been a long time since I've heard such crooning sounds and shamelessly romantic lyrics as those found in the pop/rock of the Modulators' Tomorrow's Coming. This new lp has a feel and movement more than a bit reminiscent of the best of early '70's soft - yet danceable - rock. Most recognizable are the Beach Boys ("Rainy Day Girl") and the Grass Roots ("If You Let Her Go") - altho the album inspired me to give a second listen to my old Edison Lighthouse, Vanity Fair, Carpenters [!!-Ed.], Jay & The Americans, and Bread 45's as well.

Deservedly, the album's title song, "Tomorrow's Coming," is a bouncy number with driving drums and guitars and an irresistably catchy chorus:

I turn you on, you chill me out
Warm me up and turn me down
Sew my wounds and apologize

I don't know why/you'd be surprised

"Rainy Day Girl" is a blissfully idealistic story of love from afar for "the girl with twilight in her eyes" rivaling "Cherish" and "Close To You" for bittersweets and sporting a melody that Brian Wilson would be proud of - complete with ooh-ahh harmonies. And how's this for a triplet to make out to?

I dream of sweet surrender
And all the love I'd send her
I'd walk through burning embers
For my rainy day girl.

"If You Let Her Go" is the choice rave-up of the 9-song lp, a great dancetune ala "Midnight Confessions" (except songwriter Mark Higgins trades "bump-bahs" for "nah-nahs").

But don't get me wrong - just because Tomorrow's Coming pleasantly nudged my memory doesn't mean this isn't the Modulators' own music. The songs echo the motion and emotion of the Beach Boys and Grass Roots, but the sound is not falsettos and horns, rather it's the Modulators' drum beat, guitars, and mellow male voices.

Poor' planning finds the lp starting strong but finishing weakly, though; the record's two most unmemorable cuts end the record, and they shouldn't be the last thing the listener hears.

If you're looking for hard-edged, angry, or pulsating rock 'n roll, don't look here. But if you like to sing along to melodious and sentimental pop/rock that has lyrics you can wrap your tongue around, you'll enjoy singing along to Tomorrow's Coming. You honestly won't be able to stop yourself.

ANTETAM

by Jim Testa

Antietam is staking out a unique place among bands that make a lot of racket, and that even includes the cool cacophony rent by the collection of (to borrow a line from our president) misfits, looney tunes, and noisy weirdos that comprise the Homestead roster. This particular Looney Tune boasts the Tasmanian Devil on lead guitar, the Roadrunner on double-throbbing wacko basslines, and Elmer Fudd on vocals, all wrapped up in a Southern sensibility (courtesy of the combo's Louisville roots) that keeps pumping a warm, resonant melody into even the noisiest interludes. Whew!

It's safe to say that Antietam is among the most improved bands on the local scene; what started as a ragtag out-of-tempo ensemble of displaced Southern punkers has matured into one of Hoboken's tightest, brightest bands. Now the first Antietam record, appropriately called Antietam, showcases all the things that make this group so weird but so loveable: The music rumbles, throbs, screeches, and explodes in paroxysms of electronic feedback courtesy of Tim Harris and Wolf Knapp on dueling basses and guitar backup; Tara Key's lead guitar buzzes, whines, and roars in Huskerish frenzy. The vocals are no less amazing or strange: Tara's pissed, frantic, or sob-story romantic crooning, occasionally abetted by a dour, moaning monotone from Tim. When Wolf takes a lead vocal (as on his "B.M.W.") it's a desultory, unintelligible mumble. And drummer Mike Weiner sings his song, "Don't Go Back To Greenville," with the same unabashed drive that characterizes his singularly obsessive drumming, a style that recalls what Julia Child does to veal cutlets in conjunction with the word "tenderize."

Given Tim's melancholy, plaintive vocals, Wolf's laconic drawl, and Mike's psycho-killer drums, it's easy to remember that the band takes its name from one of the bloodiest battles of the war between the states. Antietam plays rock and roll like folks who lost a civil war. They may have a lot of prove, but the South will rise again. Bet on it, y'all.

ANTETAM



ed
gein's
car



ED GEIN'S CAR, 3-song 45
319 3rd St., Brooklyn, NY 11215

For the uninformed, Ed Gein was the real-life model for Hitchcock's Norman (Psycho) Bates. Ed Gein's Car is a Brooklyn-based punk band with some great, lively songs. Their debut EP sports equal parts post-Dolls NY raunch 'n roll and thrash speedpunk. They're irreverent, funny, fast, and can put across a song with punchy backup vocals and a sharp rhythm section. And they look like, well, four mugs from Brooklyn. This is the sort of stuff Johnny Thunders used to stand for...errr, fall down for. Recommended.

- J.T.

by Bruce Gallanter

PLEASED YOUTH

"Uncle Eli's Pancake Experience," demo cassette

It's been a year since "Sure We're Pleased," Pleased Youth's first great demo, and the band is still trying to get some vinyl released on its own. What a crime! In the meantime, tho, there is this new cassette...

The double-guitar blasts of Paul Decolator and Doug Visdom are what make this work - while Paul wails away on his stomping wall of force-rhythm guitar, Doug screams out his nasty, intense lead lines on top; always together. As great as the 1st tape was, this is even hotter - blistering guitar & vocals, and the solid, pounding rhythm team of Andy Skouran's bass fury and Greg Walker's thunderous drums. The dense vocal chorus sounds like an army of men shouting proudly.

Keith Hartel, the band's new singer, is quite a youthful dynamo and his vocals are getting stronger, even vicious at times. Lyrically, Paul & Keith describe the sad shape of modern life, even introducing some psychedelic elements - the nightmarish walking shells of "The Calling," or the invitation to mass suicide in "Rock Against People." "All Wrong Now" is a great rocker in the Mott tradition & could easily be a hit. A classic rock tune from a classic band. Don't miss a chance to see them live!

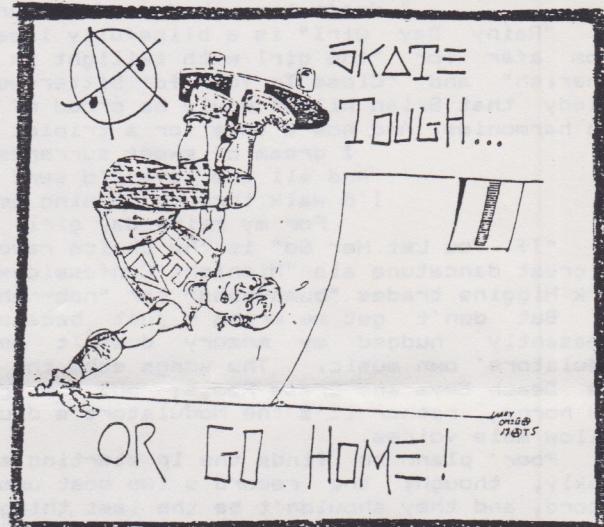
photos: Pleased Youth's Andy Skouran (u.right)
and Paul Decolator by Bruce Lee Gallanter.

SACRED DENIAL

SACRED DENIAL
Life's Been Getting To Me
4Front Records, 227 Union Ave.
Clifton, NJ 07011

Beyond Janus' raspy, screeching, yammering vocals, Sacred Denial's debut LP boasts some solidly crunchy, squealing, thrashing powerfuzz guitar from Guido. They could probably turn up Ant's bass a little, as the mix here often suffers from not enough bottom, but that's only a quibble. This is masterful hardcore from a band young enough to still be in Menudo. They change speeds with the finesse of Lamarr Hoyt - from tinkly, acoustic piano/acoustic guitar intros to manic thrashers to the near-psychadelic fuzz-guitar freakout of "Sacred Denial" - and there are even a few numbers that could pass for pop, like the funny "Pissed At The World." Check this one out!!

- Jim Testa



by Jim DeRogatis

Suspended Animation is the aural equivalent of Linda Blair in *The Exorcist*: a mad gleam in their suburban eyes, totally possessed on stage, this Westfield-based quintet too often lets things get...out of hand.

Like the time singer John Schwartz dumped a garbage barrel of water over himself, and then started throwing cans of soda at the crowd.

Or the time he knocked over a pitcher of ice water (this time at the Jetty), and tall, gangly keyboardist Matt Linden breakdanced across the floor, crawled under the table, and started lapping it up...

"Sometimes we get carried away," Schwartz says, and it's easy to see why - the band's music is like a powerful undertow that's impossible to resist.

At the center of Suspended Animation's maelstrom of sound are John Rokosny's crunching guitar and Linden's Cale-inspired keyboards. Bassist Adam Forgash supplants the melody with bouncy lead-bass lines while Rokosny solos by rubbing his guitar against mike stands, soda bottles, whatever's handy... And all the while power-drummer Joe Albanese thrashes away like *The Muppets Show's* Animal.

Center stage, though, belongs to Schwartz, a captivating frontman with a potent voice. One moment, he can be singing softly, eyes closed in rapture, the picture of the intense soulful lead in his spiffy jacket & tie; the next, he's shaking frantically and dribbling his lips for weird sound effects. Schwartz brings a suitcase full of noisy gadgets on stage, ranging from homemade maracas to a huge vacuum-cleaner hose that makes a noise like an elephant in heat.

Suspended Animation began in '83 by Schwartz, Rokosny and Linden. They recorded a 5-song EP four months after forming and, to their unending regret, released it on the now-defunct South Carolina Vital label. Recorded at New York's Record Plant and produced by the Smithereen's Pat DiNizio, it's an impressive debut recording, but confusion over the label's point of origin has caused problems. To this day, Boston radio plays the record by "that nifty South Carolina pop band, Animation."

Titled *Loud Day*, the EP made the CMJ and Boston Rock charts and gave the band an entree to gigs in Boston, D.C., and Ohio.



MATT

"When we recorded it, we looked at it as an EP," says Schwartz. "Many of the songs were written when John and I were in high school and if we didn't record it then, we never would have. We hoped to follow it up with an album a few months later, but it wasn't that easy."

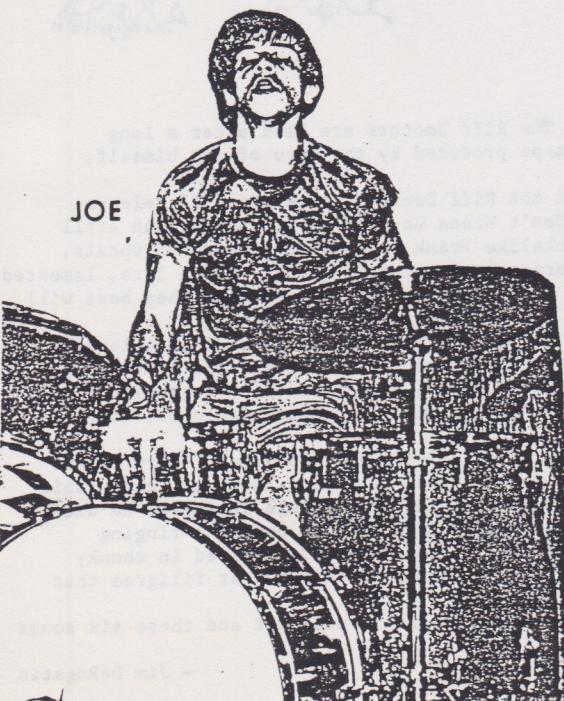
"We're dying to do another record," he adds. "We feel like we have an album, and if we don't record it now, these songs will grow old."

A 7-song demo evidences the strength of the band's new songs: a brilliant cover of the Sensational Alex Harvey Band's "St. Anthony," and intriguing originals like "Animal Car" (the vacuum hose song), the eerie "Clown At Midnite," and "Alley of Those Guys."

"We write songs about the unexpected things in life," Schwartz explains. "States of mind, killing people..."

"We don't write a lot of girl tunes, really."

Strange boys, these suburban rock 'n rollers. Anyone know a good exorcist?



JOE
THE
NUTSY CRUNCH
OF

**Suspended
ANIMATION**

tapes



Spiral Jetty

Spiral Jetty, everyone's favorite suburbanites, have just released a 4-song demo produced by Feelies Glenn Mercer and Bill Million. The tape is like a travelogue, starting with a mysterious love affair in "East Berlin," moving to "Marseilles" for Truffaut and escargot along the Seine, and then heading out to the country for the Love Tractor-ish "Tour Of Homes." The demo ends with the Jetty's stuck in a "cheesey apartment" made bearable only by love ("I shut the light and you're my America") in "All Of This."

The songs - staples of the band's live set - greatly benefit from the various Feeliesque production tricks, such as the crisp drum sound and percussion. "All Of This" soars with backing vocals and an enigmatic guitar lick that recall the Feelies' "Obedient Atom," and Adam Potkay's rhythm guitar has been mixed high and bright - very Feelies. However, unlike Million and Mercer's own productions, the Jetty's put Potkay's vocals upfront in the mix, showcasing his witty and distinctive lyrics.

Right now, there are more hopes than actual plans to release the tape as an EP; Spiral Jetty is hoping an indie label will pick the tape up and release it soon. Judging from the quality of the finished product, it won't be too long before they're out of the "mud, salt, water, rock" and into the record stores.

- Jim DeRogatis

BRAIN VACATION, "1984 Never Happened" cassette

Their second cassette release and a strange brew once again: A distinctive but muddy mix/mess of distorto guitars and the cheapest synthi sounds this side of Billy Synth. There are over 40 short tunes connected on this hour-long tape, fairly loose in structure, with oddball vocals thrown in as well; not unlike Children In Adult Jails. There is an industrial quality to it, but usually the sound is still song-like. Some of the pieces are very alien and occasionally disorienting, but never for very long. The brevity is a definite plus. Their mutant/melting sounds remind me of the Residents at times, and are filled with strange but cool surprises.

Due to the great but inexpensive production, both the guitars and synths combine as one cosmic sound. Side B is truly mind-blowing throughout. From the SMERSH-like electronic weirdness to the full blasting guitar/synth wars, there are even brief moments of beauty mixed in. This tape takes us on an unusual journey that will take a while to fully absorb. There are no accompanying notes, just a beautifully engraved cassette case. Do they ever perform live?? [No - Ed.] Lovers of the obscure, take note! For more info, write Brain Vacation c/o Jersey Beat.

- Bruce Lee Gallanter

BRAIN VACATION



Riff Drs.



Hoboken-pop fans, rejoice! The Riff Doctors are back after a long hiatus with a new six-song tape produced by the guru of pop himself, Mitch Easter.

Not much has been heard from the Riff Doctors since the 1983 release of their Coyote single, "I Don't Wanna Go Back." The new lineup still features David Letterman-lookalike Frank Bednash on guitar and vocals, and adds Donna Esposito - former lead voice 'n guitar of the late, lamented Cyclones. Each contributes three songs to the tape, which they hope will be released as an EP in the near future.

Esposito's "Say Goodbye" leads off the tape with a tale of lost love in the Peter Holsapple mode; "Set The World On Fire" tells the story of a pleasanter love affair and features some nice overdubbed harmonies. "Reckless," Esposito's third contribution, is vintage Cyclones, with her trademark breathy vocal.

Bednash's songs each pay tribute to a different pop icon: "Turn Me On" paraphrases T. Rex' "Bang A Gong;" "She" is a fine piece of Beatlemania [well...Badfingermania, maybe - Ed.]; and "The Things That Make Me Glad That I Met You" recalls Buddy Holly. Each of them have the ringing Rickenbacker sound of earlier Riff Doctors, but now phrased in chunky rhythm chords. There's none of the sparkling lead-guitar filigree that made "I Don't Wanna Go Back" shine.

Prognosis: This talented duo needs a band to play out and these six songs should be committed to vinyl, STAT.

- Jim DeRogatis

by Mike Stark

The Tryfles sorta remind me of summers up in Maine.

I've been wracking my brains for hours now to find a better opener (I've worn out their demo tape, I've worn down the carpeting, and even the cliche handbook for rock critics isn't helping much) but honestly, the "summers up in Maine" approach is all ye olde mental block if letting through. (FUNNY HOW THE MIND WORKS - YA START CONCENTRATING ON ONE THING AND YOU END UP CLAWING THROUGH A VERITABLE HAMPERLOAD OF FLASHBACKS - IT'S ENOUGH TO MAKE YA FEEL LIKE AN ACID-EATING NAME VET OR A RELATIVE OF PROUST OR SOMETHING.)

Have faith, dear reader, it should all come together after a few annoying autobiographical references.

Years before I became a big city dweller, I had put in some long, hard hours at the local lumberyard working out with the family McCulloch. It used to start up sounding like this: WHUT WHUT WHUT ROARRR...

And now it's a few years later: I lost my hick accent, I'm making the club rounds, and a band called the Tryfles are about to take the stage. There're four of 'em: two cute gents and two fine-looking skirts wielding some fine vintage instruments and ruffled shirts, and it all looked pretty innocent. At first impression, they definitely didn't remind me of summers up in Maine.

The first chord was then struck, and all first impressions were blown straight to hog's heaven.

Must say I wasn't expecting it. Lord, I thought those days were far over, but there it was. The growling snarl of a gassed-up McCulloch chainsaw starting up, and it was coming out of their Vox amps (along with various radio signals, if ya know anything about Voxs).

THE SMELL OF PINE attacked my sinuses. VISIONS OF BLOODY FLESH-MEAT danced through my aching head. And needless to say, I fainted before the second chord could be hit.

* * *

The Tryfles play in one style and one style only - old-fashioned garage-punk. No gimmicks, no polish, just primitive grunt 'n growl that'll bring back those visions of chainsaws and beef slabs if you've ever had those dubious pleasures. Tough ain't exactly the word for it. Listen, I have only fainted three times before in my life (during *The Exorcist*, during an episode of *Quincy*, and once during sex, but I was real drunk at the time, really!), so ya know I don't go dropping off for any Tom, Dick, or Harry band that thinks they're so tough or so PUNK.



Lead skirt Lesya had her talons flying all over her guitar making these fuzzed out sounds faster than a panther rips through dental floss. (She really reminded me of summers up in Maine!) PLEASE GOD, I kept thinking, KEEP THIS LIONESS ON THAT STAGE FAR, FAR AWAY FROM ME, 'CAUSE IF SHE COMES ONE STEP CLOSER, I'LL SCREAM - SCREAM FOR DEAR LIFE. I DON'T WANNA END UP LIKE ONE OF THOSE PRAYING MANTIS BUGS THAT GETS EATEN BY ITS MATE AFTER THEY REACH - GULP! - ORGASM!!

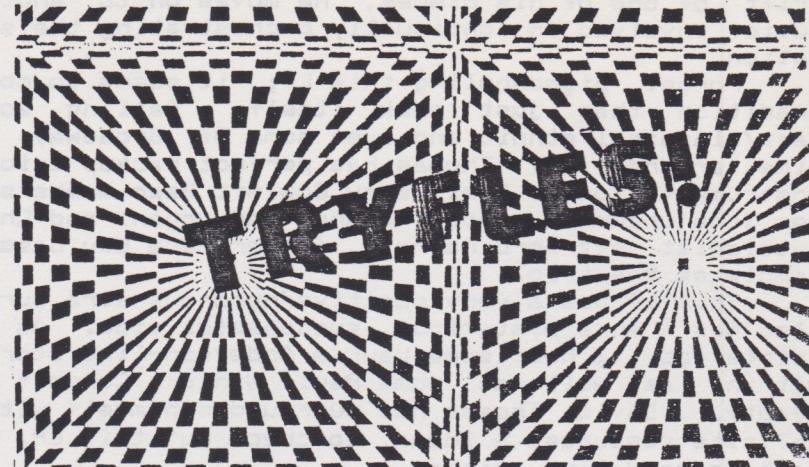
I fared better watching the others: John strumming his 12-string like a pint-sized John Sebastian, Peter doing elaborate bass runs as if it were a lead instrument ("It is," he tells me, "it is!"), and Ellen pounding her drums like a mad housewife attacking an army of frozen chopmeat. WILD!!

I WAS SAFE AS LONG AS I DIDN'T LOOK AT YOU-KNOW-WHO... But I did, and had to be carried out like some Bellevue in-patient, babbling about Roky Erikson and insect mating rituals, my fingers tearing about my own unprotected face. Maine was never quite like that!!

* * *

Okay, that was then, this is now! The Tryfles are still the toughest slingshot tooting band around, so there's a warning going out to all you would be Sabus - take along some protection, because these primitives don't take kindly to strangers. And while you're at it, better take along a Santa-sized request list, 'cause this foursome knows every song ever penned (only, of course, from the coolest decade ever, daddy-o) and they're likely to play almost anything you shout out if you're loud enough and the mood is right. Hell, if ya catch 'em on a good night (the usual), they might dabble in covering some of their garage buddies' more or less original material. I've heard them parody the Fuzztones, Mosquitos, and Cheepskates all in the same set, but when they drunkenly dared to attempt the Raunchhands' epic "Ford," they cringed reluctantly and backed down. Maybe next time, huh?

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



DAVID THOMAS

More Places Forever, LP

Twintone Records

David Thomas is an eloquent yet quirky storyteller, so convincing to the open-minded that his fractured fairy tales take on an odd but innocent sort of sense. As soon as the listener catches the drift of one of his pieces, he moves on to another area. The music involved in continually orchestrating the same feelings in motion.

Forget pigeonholing this LP; it seems to come from an older tradition than just rock itself, falling somewhere between jazz/classical/ethnic and even some Off Broadway elements. This time around, Mr. Thomas has perfect backup trio, with unusual instrumentation: 2 ex-Henry Cow/Art Bear members in Lindsay Cooper (the uncommon reeds, piano, and organ) and Chris Cutler (percussionist extraordinaire); former Pere Ubu bassist Tony Maimone completes the trio.

This LP has a very positive/humorous aura surrounding it, but also has a more mysterious, suspenseful side. As far as reference points go, I hear some Laurie Anderson-like story telling magic within, as well as some Paul Winter Consort acoustic/ethnic beauty. David Thomas has surrounded himself with musicians of infinite resources & ideas, so check out this LP. The band is not to be missed live, either.

- Bruce Lee Gallanter



REVIEWS

See the
egress, six
bucks!!

Rigby

WILL RIGBY

The Sidekick Phenomenon (Egon)

Frankly, I have mixed feelings about this here initial solo endeavor from dB's stickman William Rigby. Tis a batch o' pretty keen country toons & 6T'shish pop rockers delivered with gleeful primitivism. I like it, 'cos I prefer sweets spiked with acid. I wonder how many folks'll be dealing with this disc on that basis and how many will be seeking a dBs spinoff project? That ilk, I fear, will be severely disappointed & rightly so, 'cos S.K. has little to do with that artfit's quirky pop of yore and like NOTHING to do with the radio-friendly stuff they're into nowadays.

Thus, if you're into bands like Mofungo, Our Favorite Band, Jr. Chemists, etc., then step right up. Otherwise, you'd best invest in a new Game Theory record or somethin'.

- Howard Wuelfing

MOFUNGO

Frederick Douglas, LP
Coyote/Twintone

In days of old, when musicological thoughts ran bold...the broadcasting of punk rock aesthetics had a perhaps unforeseen and definitely overlooked side-effect. Besides allowing a generation of would-be noise mongers to retreat into the garage, it coaxed a preceding batch of misfits to finally come on out. Weirdos like Pere Ubu, 1/2 Japanese, and R. Stevie Moore had been pursuing a post-pop rock 'n roll that revolved around spontaneity, energy, and the general principle of irritating rather than ingratiating oneself to an audience well before those became punk roolz. But makin' 'em roolz made such folk think there might actually be a market for this stuff outside of x-college roommates. So they came down the driveway, formed or finally named bands to play bars, art galleries, 'n such, and went on the record.

Now I myself was living in D.C. when this was happening so I can't swear that the Mofungo/Information musicians pool plays the chicken or egg in this scheme of things, but their sound seems to indicate they had the former role. Mofungo's new LP Frederick Douglas continues thusly without appreciable modification or renovation. No dancebeat dilution ala' Material or jazzoetical pretensions or NUTHIN'. A heroic statement methinks, considering the chances for career advancement such a stand promises these days.

BUT DEFINITELY an invigorating sound, this. Freewheeling, saturated with serendipity, and heated to a cozy warmth by the thrill of discovery - not to mention its uncertainty. Fyre and alien coz it's all outa rock and roll fumbled headlong into an unforecastable extensible space (not just a layering of jazz or classical formats atop rock's). Post-Beefheart rollin' 'n rollin' avant-good. Comparisons: The Scene Is Now, with whom they share two members, currently.

- Howard Wuelfing

TRYFLES

CONT. FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

Can't end this dissertation without mentioning that the Tryfles ain't just a cover band, 'cause they do have a set's worth of originals that are worthy of a couple of paragraphs more of persuasive preaching, but I (WHOOPS!) wasted those on "summers in Maine" [and besides, this has gone on too long already, Hemingway! - Ed.] Oh well, you should soon be hearing such jangly gems as "When I See That Guy" and "Had Enough of Your Lies" on an upcoming Midnight Records 45 - and maybe, just maybe, on a lp. HEY, it might not be such a bad idea to pipe these tunes into my old place of employment. WHUP WHUP WHUP WHUP ROARR!! The cattle won't know what him 'em!!!

NEVER MIND THE BOLLOCKS

HERE'S THE

CLiNtONs

by Mike Stark

I was hanging around the locker room the other day, and even tho I'm straighter than the proverbial arrow, I couldn't help but notice the garden variety of balls revolving around me. It was like that goofy poem ya had to memorize in high school: BALLS TO THE RIGHT OF ME, BALLS TO THE LEFT ME. Yeah, it was just like that, and it was then I realized that balls, being like snowflakes, are never twice over alike.

I started thinking of what the balls of rock stars would look like (the Stones' probably deflated from old age, Duran Duran's microscopic) and then I started thinking about those of local rock stars - the Tryfles would have mega-balls; do the Mosquitos have mothballs?? Well, to get to the point, if we somehow had one of those army measure ups, you'd probably find that The Clintons would have the biggest, bulliest, rock 'n rolliest balls in New York City. I, of course, being straighter than the proverbial arrow, will in no way be involved in doing the actual measuring (girl groups being however another story.)

I first caught the Clintons down at No Se No, a social club located on Rivington Street, which was no bigger than a dorm closet, and located in a neighborhood ya wouldn't want to park your Dodge Dart in.

THE CLINTONS ALSO, IF GUESS, HAD GUTS!!

Obviously, this place wouldn't pay in greenbacks, so they played for beer (a good idea, 'cause the bar doubled as the stage), and when the beer ran out, they just played for the sake of rock 'n roll. Playing for the sake of rock 'n roll won't get ya on the subways and won't feed Africa, but it is definitely cool in my book (no matter how unimportant my book is in this world of MTV, corporate octopi, and escalating rents hitting even Clinton Street, where the group got its name).

Well, even tho the days of playing at No Se No should be over (they've played the Ritz, Irving Plaza, and now have a TwinTone/Coyote connection), they still patronize the old alma mater, which again should paste more gold stars for them in your little black book.

Guitar hero Clint Clinton is a product of his upbringing: listening to his collection of licks, one can gather that Chuck Berry, Elvis, and (don't gasp) Lynyrd Skynyrd) were equally blasted on Young Clinton's Close & Play. Same goes for bassist Joe Liberty and drummer Simon "Baby Lee" Walker. They all learnt their chops keeping an open ear to any available radio station - country to metal!



The Clintons

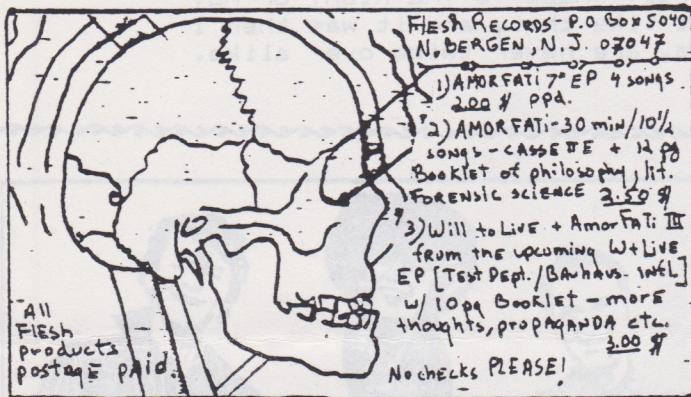
photo by F. Nataleci

The Clintons

Yeah, sometimes this group will wander into 70's cover territory and wrestle out a "Free Bird" or a "Whipping Post;" but unlike, say, the Replacements (overrated and sucky live), the Clintons don't play them as parody - they play 'em out for THE SAKE OF ROCK 'N ROLL!!

Their new single, "Girl Next Door"/"Drive Me Home" kicks more ass than a pent-up drill sergeant, and if ya want more proof about The Clintons having the biggest balls on the New York scene, just give the vinyl a spin. Hey, there's even naked ladies on the pic sleeve, and anything with naked ladies on the cover (barring, maybe, Roxy Music or a Wild Cherry album) is ok by me!

"Girl Next Door" borrows from the Del Lords' own brand of urban rockabilly, maybe because 'Lord Eric Amble produced it. It's a horny little ditty with three great chords and such teen americana lyrics as:



SPEEDY TRIALS

VARIOUS

Speed Trials, LP
Homestead Records

...insofar as this here Speed Trials compilation had 5 whole days of downtown bohunk battiness to draw upon and only ventures 2 acts that ain't been conveniently rendered relatively bankable this past year (via NME cover stories, etc.), 'tis suspect. I mean, the Beastie Boys opened for Madonna, right?

But hell, the music is overall danged good and the few surprises that compilers Tom Paine (of Live Skull) and Peter Wright (of Dutch East) allow are real humdingers; to wit, Live Skull's coruscating, bass-heavy beauty, "I Was Wrong," and the slippery, punk gamelan-arama of "YTYKYD" by Eliot Sharp and Carbon. These cuts function just as cuts on a sampler should: make me want to go back after another, bigger taste. The name acts - Sonic Youth, Swans, and the Fall - all do what we've come to expect - and cherish. But I was expecting the unexpected.

Only Lydia Lunch comes up with that - as you'd expect. "Main Kelly And Me On A Bender" is a loping, hambone blues vamp provided by the Swans that is interrupted by a humorous but undeniably artful spoken interlude (provided by Swans' guitarist Norman Westberg).

Recorded in Spring, '83, at the "Speed Trials" festival, this LP woulda been a real eye-opener if released back then. A vicious hammerblow to the temple of the lame rockaboochie revivalism and entropic terminalization of the first hardcore wave then in control of would-be hepsters' brainwaves. Now Speed Trials adds a few not-especially revelatory footnotes to a claque that's already said at least some of its piece quite effectively, thank you.

- Howard Wuelfing

This special-issue 3-song 12-inch from Geffen introduces Adam Bomb. Sheesh! Stupid name, but the dude fronts a verrry respectable combo with metal vets like Jimmy Crespo (ex-Aerowax) and Phil Feit (Billy Idol bassist) and churns out some ok tunes. This isn't speedcore or new-wave metalshit but ballsy hard rock, and maybe it is as retro as Ozzy but truth to tell, it don't sound a whole lot diff from the Raspberries or Sweet or those pop/metal avatars of the '70's that old rockerit weenies like Wuelfing & Testa dig soooo much in their dotage. So when Adam Bomb hits the rax with his Geffen produkt, check it out. It won't be the bomb the name implies.

- "Metal" Mike Ferris

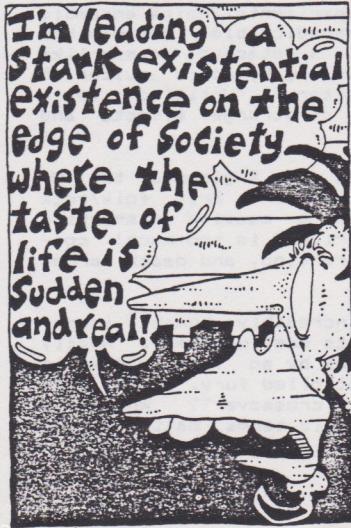
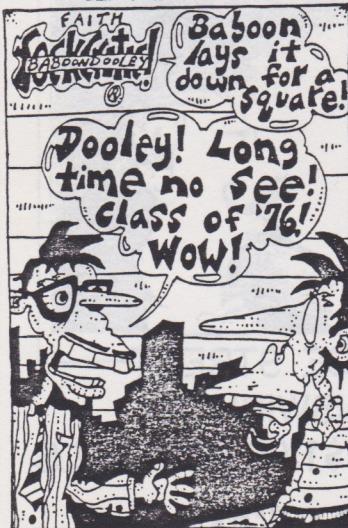


THROWING MUSES
EP, Throwing Muses
Box 9515, N. Dartmouth, MA 02747

THROWING MUSES

These four New England art-preps (just graduated from high school) may remind you of Salem 66. The sexual alignment is the same (3 gals, 1 guy), as is the dark, moody air of post-punk folkie eccentricity sung in sweet alto voices. While the songs on this nicely produced 10" EP stay with you, it would be nice if the band could lighten up; every cut is somber, serious, and portentously heavy with symbolism. I bet the theme of their senior prom was "Famine." More product is promised for September and I'll be awaiting it eagerly.

- Jim Testa



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NOISE/SLUDGE/SPEEDCORE/MUTANT ANGST? NEW JERSEY'S GOT IT!

by Bruce Lee Gallanter

NEW JERSEY'S GOT IT!
Buy Our Records, PO Box 363, Vauxhall, NJ 07088

It's befitting that this is the most consistently powerful compilation to come out of NJ; comprised of 9 variations on modern-punk-noise-thrash, all the bands offer different approaches & sounds. Many of these units are making strong statements, when not totally making fun of modern life. A large dose of biting humor, often deranged, but usually to the point, infects many cuts. The cover has a bleak photo of the pollutive PJP Landfill and its effluvium hovering over the Pulaski Skyway, a sight from many of our nightmares. That's what NJ has got, but it also has these bands:

BEDLAM: Rather direct. Who else would do a loud, screaming tune on insomnia? Their sound has grown more refined (?) due to better production than on their out-of-print LP. Thick, mean, splattered dinosaur stomp, almost metalish. Their other tune is a surfin' sludge instrumental dedicated to the almighty herb, ending hilariously in a coughing fit.

BODIES IN PANIC: The paranoia provided by our gov't is mixed with some heavily fuzzed guitar intensity; nasty vocals as well. Kyle continues to sneer along with the best. Their other song is about desiring a girl like that sex machine, "Wendy O."

CYANAMID: Also benefiting from better direct-to-sludge production, "NJ Is A Mall" (how true) features an on-slaught guitar/drums explosion with Danny's mind-warping voice bellowing on top & Sparky's bass erupting on the bottom. Mutant angst at its most intense! "Support" is a real sludge delight, with Danny as the voice of the collective unconscious, making us question ourselves & our support of "the scene." Extremely twisted guitar disease providing the ugly truth.

PLEASED YOUTH: PY hits the nail squarely on the head by proclaiming "I'd Rather Be An Asshole (then be in the scene)." Another appropriate anti-lunkhead scourge. The thick, messy production melts the guitars together into one grinding mass. The drums pound like thunder on "Obedience School", claiming that college is a waste of time. Hmmm?

CHILDREN IN ADULT JAILS: A unique approach. Brilliant but demented, scary but real, loose but tight, twisted but true. In "Fishing For Compliments," the spirits erupt full force, double-guitar strum fury. In "Dog Day," Sue Braun goes all the way, screaming, even barking. Superb slide guitar starts things off & double guitar insanity finishes us off. And that very last scream will do us all in!

STETZ: Both tunes from this band - around for a few years but with very few live gigs behind them - show maturing production and songwriting. A tight, burning trio, with more refined fuzz guitar tone & hot, pumping rhythm team, as all as strong double vocals all highlight their sound.

MY 3 SONS: An ever-changing experimental/noise ensemble of distorted dreams. Totally unpredictable. "People Who Bleed" is a dense, nasty ditty; a detached, Cramps-like Drano voice emotes over one scowling hypnotic guitar & one totally fractured sick guitar. "Untitled" is a demanding avant alien landscape of strange effects and deadpan vocals.

SACRED DENIAL: More possessed doom & gloom of the NJ variety. "What Religion" begins with a Brit folk/rock intro but soon gets hurled into a massive disturbing shredding guitar storm. "Our Friend" is too much! completed darkness, Nick Cave-like ranting, and death warmed over.

ADRENALIN O.D. - Absolutely, incredibly, humanly impossible, full-blown speedcore at its most powerful. Mostly a blur & hard to grasp, it flies by so fast. Amazing double-guitar wall-of-noise controlled fury. Do I hear some Motorhead tendencies & metal crossover?? When you are this hot none of those stupid terms matter. ADD rule!!

Influenced, they say, by the likes of Void, Mission of Burma, and Sonic Youth - "noise" bands that have extended the narrow boundaries imposed by hardcore's whamalama fury - the Tollbooth trio use ear-damaging feedback guitar, jarring tempo changes, and bass riffs pounding enough to cause bloody noses in pursuit of their sound.

Guitarist Dave Rick, bassist Gerard Smith, and drummer Jon Coats have only played a few live dates, but their initial demo and an opening gig for Chicago's Big Black at Maxwells were impressive enough to catch the ear of Homestead Records' Gerard Cosloy, who ordered up a second demo. Song titles like "Ohm On The Range" hint at the band's cheeky sense of humor, while the music's frenetic white-noise intensity suggests a darker personality. Yet Rick's cherubic demeanor is a far cry from the angst-ridden cacophony of the songs he decries; while impressive, Rick's noise-rocker stance is not totally convincing. Bassist Smith strikes a more believable psycho-killer pose on his lead vocal turns. And Jon Coats behind the drumkit does not know the meaning of the word "halfway;" his complex, speedcore fills never let up. They're young and still searching for an identity, but Phantom Tollbooth promises a tooth-rattling future, probably somewhere between #1 with a bullet and #1 on the Top Ten Wanted list at the post office.

- Testa/DeRogatis



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Modest Proposal

MODEST PROPOSAL

"I've Seen Your Face Before"/"Nobody Says No"
c/o Augenstein, 1821 Newton St. N.W., Wash. DC 20010

Mods and fans of same should like the debut 45 from D.C.'s Modest Proposal, assuming that their definition of "Mod" has everything to do with the Jam and little else. Welleresque chord changes and harmony backups straight from Setting Sons set the tone; ringing chordal guitar parts, crisp drums, and an affected Brit accent from singer Neil Augenstein complete the picture. A tuneful, well-produced indie effort here, made much more enjoyable if you can overlook the fact that there isn't an original idea anywhere in earshot.

- J.T.

OFFBEATS

OFFBEATS

"I Can See Your House From Here EP"
Oops! Records, Box 93747, Cleveland, OH 44101

Relive the glory days of British punk with Cleveland's Offbeats: "Sad" smacks of the Boomtown Rats, "Seven Days" is pure Buzzcocks, and Side 2's "Happiness" and the anti-nuke "Last Days" kick in like early Clash. Pretty derivative but fun punk 'n roll.

THE FORM

THE FORM

"It Happens That Way"/"All The Young Dudes"
TwinTone Records, 45

These Minneapolis punksters will no doubt suffer endless comparisons to the Replacements—and with some good reasons: Their debut 45 is on the 'mats old label, they hail from the same turf, and "It Happens That Way" has much the same breakneck teenage energy as the Replacements' debut, "I'm In Trouble." But bassist Paul Harsha can play rings around Tommy Stinson, and Form vocalist Nic Santiago is big enough to be three Paul Westerbergs, so don't pigeonhole these guys yet; I expect hot stuff to follow. The flip is a cover of "All The Young Dudes," which The Form plays much too fast, God bless 'em.

- J.T.

REVIEWS



HEAVY MENTAL

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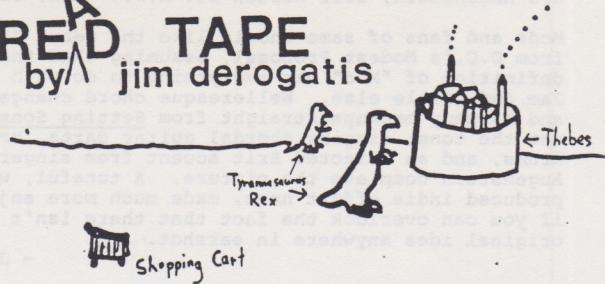


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RED TAPE by Jim DEROGATIS



The majority of our tapes this month come from out-of-towners, but first the local stuff: From Hackettstown, we have THINGS IN COMMON, who have a lot in common with the myriad of faceless synthesized dance-muzak bands from across the sea. "Exposed" and "Late Night Radio" sound like Simple Fears or Minds For Tears or something. For people who like Danceteria.

For people who prefer The Dive, MOD FUN has recorded a demo for a 3-song 45 just weeks after the release of their Midnight EP, 90 Wardour Street. "Action Tyme" is a swell piece of Byrdsmania that sounds like an extension of the EP, but "I Believe" and "You've Been Hangin' 'Round" see the band back in a raunchier rock 'n roll mode, and they're arguably the two most powerful songs Mick London has written.

We received two tapes from artsy denizens of the Lower East Side: The first is LOUNGE LIZARDS LIVE 79/81, a ROIR cassette-only release that captures the notorious "fake jazz" combo at various venues during their salad days. Arto Lindsay squeals, John Lurie blats, and Anton Fier thumps, but none of it beats real Monk. Strictly for pseudo-intellectuals who smoke a pipe, lunch in SoHo, and frequent Bergman films at the Thalia.

Strictly for the adventurous is this issue's pick hit, Stars Vomit Coffee Shop, a collection of 14 songs by Frank Kogan, formerly the driving force of Red Dark Sweet. Kogan's songs are in the "Sister Ray" vein: driving, possessed, and intense. His guitar seems to have a life of its own, and the lyrics are consistently intriguing (note "Fire Hydrant" and "Baby Doe.") Well worth seeking out.

The best of the out-of-town lot hails from the Fostex Deck/One Man Band School (fellow alumni: R. Stevie Moore, Bandaido, Amor Fati). Northampton, MA's RAY MASON has a two-sided tape, IT'S TIME TO CAPTIVATE A PLANET, with a total of 26 folk-inflected pop songs. Mason's thank-you list betrays his influences (ranging from the Beatles to Brian Wilson and the dBs to R.E.M.), as does his cover of Jon Sebastian's "Didn't Want To Have To Do It." A good bet for pop fans.

The odds aren't as good with three tapes from the garage: Evanston, Illinois' HEAVY MENTAL is a standard fuzz 'n fury revival group. An amphetimized version of "Revolution" is nice but there's nothing revolutionary about the rest of the band's 8-song tape. Rochester's INVISIBLE PARTY have the same problem on their "Decibel Delinquents" live tape; no new twists, but the singer does a nice Sky Saxon.

Cleveland's LIBERTINES have roots in the garage but don't really sound imitative on their live tape. Their songwriting is ballsy and intelligent and the tape is a compelling treat. Search out the band's 45 and watch for them to tour these parts soon.

Finally, we arrive at the other side of the continent with a compilation of 9 Seattle bands. Unfortunately, THE SOUNDS OF YOUNG SEATTLE seem too much like The Sounds of Old England. These cuts are depressing dirge-rock (Joy Division fans, take note) with the exception of Dr. Bombay's bizarre "In A Time Machine," whose lunacy seems out of place amidst the general air of gloom 'n doom that pervades these cuts.

Are you sure Todd Hess came from Seattle??

FRANK KOGAN



STARS VOMIT COFFEE SHOP



by Bruce Lee Gallanter

FROZEN CONCENTRATE
a fzo zen con centrate, LP

In the last few years, the New Brunswick/Rutgers area has produced a wealth of pop, music that is often intelligent, sensitive, and poetic, and which utilizes divergent influences. The bands I speak of are Frozen Concentrate, the Young Turks, and their combined offshoot, the Lunar/Bear Ensemble. There are both psychedelic and progressive elements found in their music, as well as funk, blues, third world rhythms, and more avant ideas thrown in, too.

Frozen Concentrate has been together the longest (it shows) and they continually evolve, mature, expand, and absorb other musics, making for an exciting, unique combination. Their current lineup contains 3 sets of doubles: Most of the lead vocals (& lyrics) are provided by the refreshingly pure voice of Tina Maschi, with exquisite background vocals (and percussion) by Christine Kinny. Altho most of the lead guitar comes from Mike Flynn, who is never less than superb and spirited, Tina also plays a shimmering rhythm guitar & pulls off fine solos of her own. Brad Hall plays the trap drum set (occasionally singing lead too) and Ric Montanez plays assorted other percussion, uniting in the flow/pulse. Chris Burke is their hot electric bassist. They are an infinitely tight unit, with hip grooves throughout.

This new album is a long time in coming (Frozen has only managed to release 2 fine singles in their 2+ years history), with a lovely, animated pastel cover and great production to boot.

In "He/She/It," Tina's voice has a nice way of growing on one, like the voice of a friend. The vocal harmonies soar, they rhythm feels just right. So get up & start dancing! On "The Atoms Go Dancing," Tina's voice comes directly from the heart; the whole performance shines. "The Hotel Feelings" features the stinging guitar work of Mr. Flynn, and he never lets up.

The static mesmerizing groove of "Afro Zen" seems to center on the complexities of Afro/pop music. Christine lets out some rather strange vocal bird sounds as well. An extension of this piece, "Afro Dubzilla," opens side two. Definitely dub, it swirls around in my brain, the cosmic production dropping odd sounds in and out of the mix. Truly out there! Most effective piece!

Brad Hall sings the lead on "The Real Thang" & it certainly is, with its Talking Heads groove and Funkadelic-like group vocals. They finally get down to a slow, sly, softer groove on "Skin," with sensuous, flowing vocals and a more classic guitar line from Mike. The LP closes with "Gotta Make A Living," A 60's-ish folk/rock beauty, so melancholy & sweet it makes you feel good to be alive (take that, all you jaded punks).



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by Mike Stark

MOSQUITOS

That Was Then - This Is Now! EP
Valhalla Records

The title of the Mosquitos' debut EP says it all: Sure, they started out 3 years ago as a Merseybeat-flavored cover band, but that was *then*. Sure, they had moptops all over the city screaming their little paisley lungs out for "Let's Stomp!" and "Some Other Guy," but that was *then*. Sure, they were New York's greatest garage band, but that too was *then*. With the release of this record, the Mosquitos are **NOW** NYC's greatest band, *period!!*

Sorry, purists, but the 5 modern pop classics trapped on this wax will soon get you forgetting their gone-by cave stomp days. The originals that head honcho Vance Breschia penned are better than any oldie the flyboys ever covered, and the polished production here proves that not everything recorded with post-'67 equipment is destined for Giorgio Moroder-land. If this doesn't get any FM, AM, or "mod" college radio play, I'll slit my wrists with the first Big Star lp or just sell my electric guitar in total despair.

'70's power-pop fans will instantly be stung by "Do You Want To Hurt Me," the leadoff cut, which starts with a drum roll (provided by Muscular Mitch Towse) so powerful my apartment shook as if an aerobics class for sumo wrestlers were going on upstairs. Poppy? Yes! Wimpy? NO!!!

"That Was Then - This Is Now", the title track, ends all arguments that these guys are just Beatlemaniacs. The influence is pure *Sweetheart Of The Rodeo* and the lead break is obviously more Clarence White than George Harrison.

Side 2 starts off with "Put Your Foot Down," the Mosquitos' gutsiest live song, which producer Toby Lynne captured perfectly in the studio without losing a single iota of energy. Yeah, you could probably harness enough kilowatts to power Liverpool with one of Vance's record-breaking SCREAMS! The Lennon/McCartney-esque "I Know A Secret" quickly follows. Listen to the background vocals from Tony Millions (keyboards) and Iaian Morrison (bass). Gosh, I bet castrati choirboys would kill for lungs like that! [among other things...Ed.]

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What's da buzz?

zoo müsick

ZOO MUSICK
14 Edgehill St., Princeton, NJ 08540

Zoo Musick is a synth band but the pretty ballad on the A-side of this debut EP doesn't get locked into a robot dancebeat or let the synthesizers program the music. Instead, the distinctive voice of the band's female vocalist, LaRae, and her tinkling piano accompaniment lead the way through a sinuous melody. The human drumming from John Garretson helps too. I haven't enjoyed a new female singer's voice this much since "Echo Beach," which makes "Absence In The Heart" something special. That's the good news. The bad news is that Side Two is a shlocky embarrassment, starting with the Paul Simon-ish hipster lyrics of "The Candy Store" (inner-city funk tableau by a Princeton synth band? Puh-lease!), followed by the most cliched disco of 1985, "Contact Sport." Zoo Musick has some good ideas and a great asset in LaRae, but they would be wise to stick to ballads; their dance müsick is wedding muzak for disco bubbleheads.

- J.T.

SQUEAKY CLEAN, 6-song mini-LP
Drip Dry Records
Box 3591, New Hyde Park, NY 11040

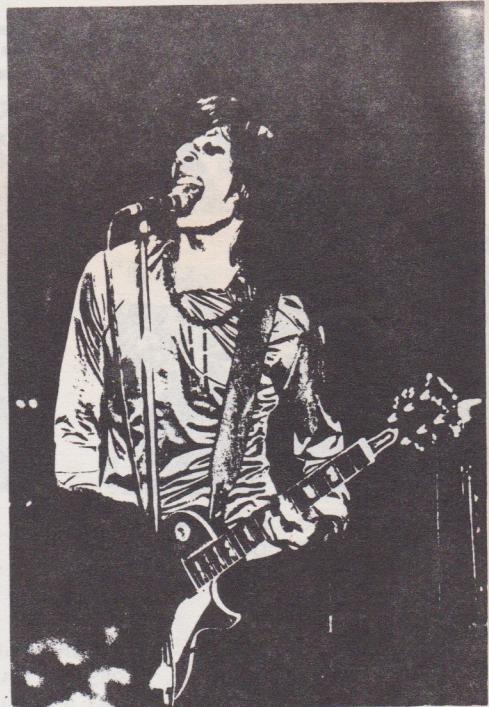
This sort of dreck insults the memory of the original rockabilly cats, teen rebels whose dirty-minded, stompin' rockers preached sex and hot-rodding and hell-raising as a lifestyle. Squeaky Clean more than lives up to their unfortunate name: seamlessly polished production, cutesy vocals, and a bland repertoire of pre-formed riffs. If Wally and the Beaver had formed a band way back when, they would've sounded this wholesome - and boring.

- J.T.

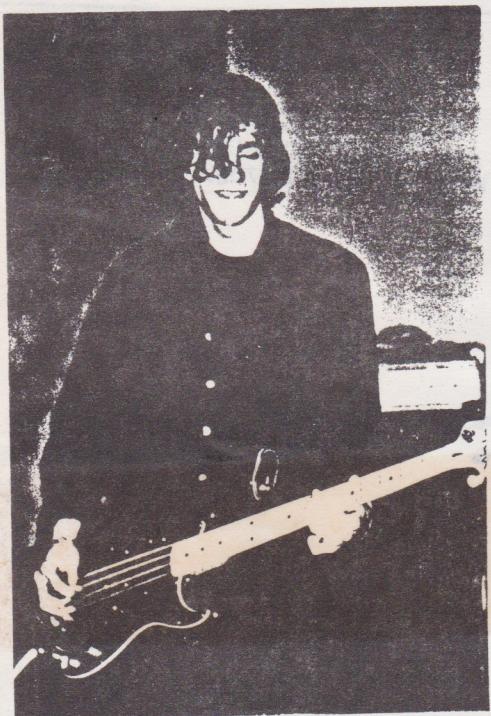


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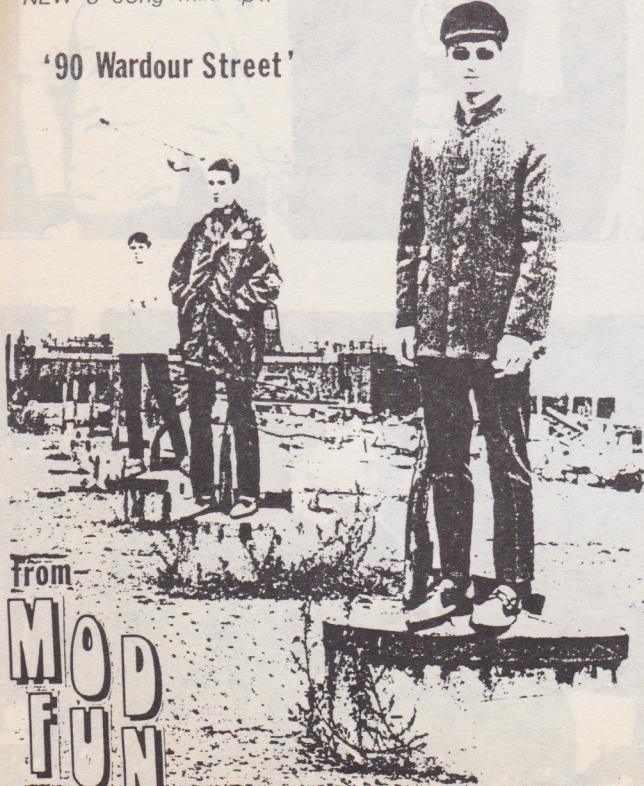
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